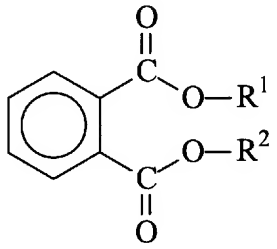
Amendment to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace the prior version in the application.

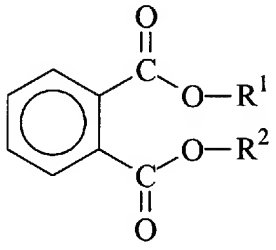
Claims

1. (currently amended) Process for the treatment of a metal hydrotreating catalyst in oxide form, characterized in that it consists in bringing ~~it~~ said hydrotreating catalyst into contact, in the absence of a sulphur compound, with at least one compound chosen from orthophthalic acid, phthalic anhydride or the ester of general formula (I):



in which the symbols R^1 and R^2, which are identical or different, each represent an alkyl (linear or branched), cycloalkyl, aryl, alkylaryl or arylalkyl radical, ~~it being possible for this~~ said radical ~~to comprise~~ comprising from 1 to 18 carbon atoms and optionally one or more heteroatoms.

2. (currently amended) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the compound brought into contact with the catalyst is an ester of general formula (I):



---

in which the symbols R^1 and R^2, which are identical or different, each represent an alkyl (linear or branched), cycloalkyl, aryl, alkylaryl or arylalkyl radical, said radical comprising from 1 to 18 carbon atoms and optionally one or more heteroatoms.

3. (currently amended) Process according to ~~either of Claims 1 and 2~~ Claim 1, characterized in that ~~the ester of formula (I) is such that the symbols~~ R^1 and R^2 represent identical alkyl radicals comprising from 1 to 8 carbon atoms.

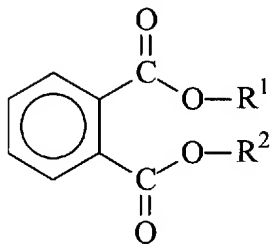
4. (currently amended) Process according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 3~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the ester of formula (I) is diethyl orthophthalate.

5. (currently amended) Process according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 4~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the hydrotreating catalyst ~~is based on~~ comprises molybdenum, tungsten, nickel and/or cobalt oxides, ~~which oxides are~~ deposited on a porous inorganic support.

6. (currently amended) Process according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 5~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the ester of formula (I) ~~brought into contact with the catalyst~~ is dissolved in toluene.

7. (currently amended) Process for the sulphidation of a metal hydrotreating catalyst in oxide form, comprising:

-a) ~~a stage of treatment as defined in one of Claims 1 to 6~~ contacting a hydrotreating catalyst, in the absence of a sulphur compound, with at least one compound chosen from orthophthalic acid, phthalic anhydride or the ester of general formula (I):



in which the symbols R^1 and R^2, which are identical or different, each represent an alkyl (linear or branched), cycloalkyl, aryl, alkylaryl or arylalkyl radical, said radical comprising from 1 to 18 carbon atoms and optionally one or more heteroatoms: followed by

-b) ~~a stage of bringing~~ contacting the catalyst thus treated ~~into contact~~ with a sulphidation agent, and ~~by~~ thereafter or simultaneously

-c) ~~a stage of bringing into contact~~ contacting the catalyst thus treated with hydrogen~~;~~ ~~stage b) being followed by stage c) or else stages b) and c) being carried out simultaneously~~.

8. (currently amended) Process according to Claim 7, characterized in that the sulphidation agent is a hydrocarbonaceous feedstock to be hydrodesulphurized, optionally with the addition of a sulphur compound~~, such as carbon disulphide, an organic sulphide, disulphide or polysulphide, a thiophene compound or a sulphur-comprising olefin~~.

9. (currently amended) Process according to ~~either of Claims 7 and 8~~ Claim 7, characterized in that ~~DMDS is employed as~~ said sulphidation agent is dimethyl disulphide~~, included~~ in a proportion of 0.5 to 5%, ~~preferably of 1 to 3%,~~ in a hydrocarbonaceous feedstock.

10. (currently amended) Process according to ~~one of Claims 7 to 9~~ Claim 7, characterized in that stage a) is carried out in ~~an appropriate~~ a mixing device and stage b) and stage c) are carried out simultaneously ~~he product obtained is sulphided~~ in an industrial hydrotreating reactor~~, by simultaneous implementation of stages b) and c)~~.

11. (currently amended) Process according to ~~one of Claims 7 to 9~~ Claim 7, characterized in that stage a) and ~~the operation in which the catalyst obtained is brought into contact with the sulphidation agent in accordance with~~ stage b) are carried out in two mixing devices which are identical or different and stage c) is carried out in an industrial hydrotreating reactor.

12. (currently amended) Process according to ~~one of Claims 7 to 9~~ Claim 7, characterized in that stage a) is carried out in an industrial hydrotreating reactor ~~and is~~ followed by ~~the sulphidation of the catalyst thus treated in the same reactor by simultaneous implementation of stages~~ stage b) and c) in the same industrial hydrotreating reactor.

13. (new) Process according to Claim 2, characterized in that R^1 and R^2 represent identical alkyl radicals comprising from 1 to 8 carbon atoms.

14. (new) Process according to Claim 8 characterized in that said sulphur compound is selected

from-carbon disulphide, an organic sulphide, disulphide or polysulphide, a thiophene compound or a sulphur-comprising olefin.

15. (new) Process according to Claim 9 characterized in that said dimethyl disulphide is in a proportion of 1 to 3%, in a hydrocarbonaceous feedstock.